

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

1. HOUSE SHREW *SUNCUS MURINUS* (LINNAEUS) FEEDING ON AN OLIVE KEELBACK WATER SNAKE *ATRETIUM SCHISTOSUM* (DAUDIN)

The house shrew *Suncus murinus* is known to be aggressive to animals much larger than it in size, like the house crow, domestic dog or large bandicoot rat, and is capable of defending itself (Mandal 1984, Biswas and Mandal 1984, Pradhan 1980). It is also reported to attack frogs and toads (Dharmakumarsinhji 1946, Sharma 1992, Tiwari 1994), snake (Behura 1958), gerbille (Saini and Parshad 1994). But there is no record of its feeding on a snake. Behura (1958) observed a house shrew dragging a keelback water snake *Natrix stolata* into his house. I had the opportunity of observing a house shrew feeding on an olive keelback water snake *Atretium schistosum*.

On November 9, 1998, at about 1725 hrs. I observed that a male house shrew had seized a snake (approximately 25 cm long) by its lower jaw and dragged it towards a small bush by the side of a pond, in front of Beledanga Primary

School, Shakuntala Park, Calcutta. As this snake has a very sluggish nature, it did not make any violent movement. When I approached, the shrew left the snake and hid itself among the bushes. I retreated a few steps and watched the scene from a distance of about 4 m. The snake moved its head, body and tail slowly. After a while, the shrew came out of the bush, seized the snake again by its lower jaw, and dragged it inside the bush. Within two minutes, I heard the crushing sound of some hard parts from the bush. After half an hour, I approached the site with a torch, and found that the shrew had eaten about 3-4 cm of the snake, starting from its head region.

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2. RUSTYSPOTTED CAT *PRIONAILURUS RUBIGINOSUS*, A NEW RECORD FOR NAGARJUNASAGAR SRISAILAM TIGER RESERVE, ANDHRA PRADESH

On April 30, 1998, a fresh carcass of a cat was seen around 0630 hrs on the road near Buredupally Bhavi towards Vatavarlapally on the

Amrabad Plateau of the Nagarjunasagar Srisailam Tiger Reserve. Closer observation revealed a soft tawny coat with a rufous tinge